

AFRI NIFA Fellowships Grant Program
FY 2014
Frequently Asked Questions

- What is the NIFA Fellowships Program?
 - The NIFA Fellowships Program provides fellowships to outstanding pre- and postdoctoral students in the food, agricultural, natural resources, and human sciences.
- What is the focus of the Program?
 - The Program is focused on developing technical and functional competence for predoctoral students and the research independence and teaching credentials of post-doctoral students.
- What is the funding rate of submitted applications?
 - For Fiscal Year 2013, the funding rate was approximately **16%**.
- What Project Types are available?
 - Research
 - Education
 - Extension
 - Integrated (includes at least two of the three functions above)
- What are the general components of the application?
 - focused research, education, and/or extension objectives aligned with NIFA's Foundational Areas and Challenge Areas (as applicable);
 - well-developed academic experiences;
 - productive and interactive mentoring; and
 - appropriate and applicable training activities, so that Fellows will be prepared to join the professional workforce.
- What are the Foundational Areas?
 - Plant health and production and plant products;
 - Animal health and production and animal products;
 - Food safety, nutrition, and health;
 - Renewable energy, natural resources, and environment;
 - Agriculture systems and technology; and
 - Agriculture economics and rural communities.
- What are the Challenge Areas?
 - Agricultural and Natural Resources Science for Climate Variability and Change;
 - Childhood Obesity Prevention;
 - Food Safety;
 - Food Security;
 - Sustainable Bioenergy; and
 - Water Resources.

- Predoctoral Students
 - What are the eligibility requirements?
 - The individual must have advanced to candidacy, as per institutional requirements, by **February 20, 2014**, and provide documentation from the graduate advisor or the institution by the application deadline. **The intent of the NIFA Predoctoral Fellowship Program is to support current doctoral students who are at the stage of conducting dissertation research, ultimately leading to completion of the dissertation and respective terminal degree.** Predoctoral students, inclusive of those with Baccalaureate and/or Masters degrees, who meet the aforementioned criteria, may apply.
 - The individual (i.e., student) seeking support via the application (whether as the applicant or through the mentor institution) must be a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States.
 - How much money is available and for how long?
 - Predoctoral Fellowship applications must not exceed \$79,000 total (including institutional allowance) for project periods of up to 2 years.
- Postdoctoral Students
 - What are the eligibility requirements?
 - All doctoral degree requirements must be satisfied no earlier than January 1, 2011 and no later than **November 20, 2014**, and provide documentation from the graduate advisor/graduate committee or the institution by the application deadline.
 - The individual (i.e., student) seeking support via the application (whether as the applicant or through the mentor institution) must be a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States
 - How much money is available and for how long?
 - Postdoctoral Fellowship applications must not exceed \$150,000 total (including institutional allowance) for project periods of up to 2 years.
- I am not sure if I am eligible.
 - It may be helpful to think of the following requirements.
 - You must be able to dedicate **100% effort** to an Extension, Education, Research, or Integrated NIFA Fellowship Project for a period of up to two years.
 - You must meet the stipulated dates for eligibility (as per 7 CFR 3430).
 - Your institution, through the application, certifies that you meet the eligibility requirements.
- Are indirect costs allowed?
 - No. Institutional allowance, in lieu of indirect costs, not to exceed \$2,400 per year, may be requested.
- Must I submit a Letter of Intent?
 - Yes.

- When are the Letters of Intent due?
 - December 12, 2013 (5:00 p.m., ET)
- When are the applications due?
 - February 20, 2014 (5:00 p.m., ET)
- How much time must I dedicate to the project?
 - At the time of the award, Fellows are required to carry out their projects on a **full-time basis** (i.e. 100% effort), as specified by the sponsoring institution in accordance with its own policies.
- If I receive an award, when can I expect to start?
 - At least six months after the submission deadline date for the program.
- Where can I obtain more information?
 - <http://nifa.usda.gov/fo/afrinifafellowshipsgrantprogram.cfm>.